



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
GOVERNOR DANIEL P. MALLOY

Testimony of Daniel P. Malloy,
Governor of the State of Connecticut
to the Joint Committee on Labor and Public Employees
on Governor's Bill HB 5054, An Act Concerning Unemployed Job Seekers
February 18, 2012

Good Afternoon, Senator Osten, Representative Tercyak, Senator Markley, Representative Smith, and the distinguished members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee. I am proud to submit testimony in support of Governor's Bill HB 5054 - ***An Act Concerning Unemployed Job Seekers***

Governor's Bill HB 5054, *An Act Concerning Unemployed Job Seekers* does two very important things:

1. It makes it an unlawful practice for employers or agents of employers to advertise a job opening stating that an applicant's status as unemployed will disqualify them for consideration.
2. It makes it an unlawful practice for an employer or agents of employers to screen candidates for employment or referrals for employment based solely on their status as unemployed.

For the past three years, we have made significant progress on economic recovery and job creation. Despite this progress, our work is not done. To address a fundamental unfair barrier - to the long term unemployed men and women particularly older workers, people with disabilities, and women - I submit this bill before you today.

Over the last several years, there has been evidence in this region and nationwide of negative perceptions about the long-term unemployed. The practice of publicly advertising job openings with a requirement that applicants be currently employed is deplorable. Some employment agencies use software to automatically filter unemployed individuals out of consideration for open positions. For example, workers who want to earn a decent wage and support their family who happen to take a leave of absence from a previous job to care for a loved one can be disqualified for consideration automatically.

The fact a long term unemployed person literally has less of a chance of finding employment than someone who is currently employed, even though he or she may

be more qualified for the position is inherently unfair and this legislation will address that issue.

This bill does not prohibit an employer from choosing the best candidate for the position. It does not prohibit the consideration of skills, relevant experience, education, current licensure or other credentialing statuses. Nor does it bar an employer from inquiring the reason for the candidate being currently unemployed.

This legislation very simply removes a barrier to reemployment without interfering in business' hiring decisions. It ensures that anyone who is unemployed looking for work will, at the very least, have their resumes considered and not automatically disqualified. This is a common sense issue of fairness which can affect our family members, friends, and our communities.

An Act Concerning Unemployed Job Seekers is important to our citizens who are seeking work and hopefully serves as a model for other states. It is the right thing to do.

Thank you, and I look forward to working with the Labor and Public Employees Committee and the Connecticut General Assembly to move this important proposal supporting Connecticut's workers forward.